Bonn to Take Over Gehlen Group, Mysterious Intelligence Agency: ...
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Bonn to Take Over Gehlen Group, Mysterious Intelligence Agency

Leader of Organization Was German Spy Against Soviet —Said to Get U. S. Aid

By M. S. HANDLER
Special to The New York Times.

BONN, Germany, July 20—The West German Government announced today the Cabinet had decided recently to take over the Gehlen Organization, a private intelligence agency in the service of a United States intelligence group.

The Gehlen Organization, named after its head, former Gen. Reinhard Gehlen, is said to include as many as 3,000 agents whose main task is to collect intelligence on and in East Europe. It has a reputation, which cannot be confirmed, of being the most effective body in action against the East European Communist Governments and their security organizations.

According to reports that cannot be confirmed the main stream of East European information received by the United States Central Intelligence Agency originates with the Gehlen Organization. It is commonly assumed by most politically minded Germans that the Gehlen Organization was created under the auspices of and financed with United States funds.

The founder of the organization and its present director was head of the German Army Intelligence Service on the Soviet front during World War II. Most of his agents are said to have served under him on that front.

Others Reported Recruited

Herr Gehlen was said to have brought over with him to United States intelligence almost the entire personnel of the German Army's General Staff section that conducted military espionage against the Russians in the East.

Herr Gehlen's inaccessibility has made him something of a legendary figure in post-war Germany. He has been credited by some with great intelligence and denounced by others as a sinister figure.

The headquarters of the Gehlen Organization is somewhere in Bavaria. Its agents are said to operate in all eastern European countries, where the authorities have frequently charged at "show" trials that the prisoners were in Herr Gehlen's service.

According to reports current in West Germany, Herr Gehlen's annual budget, met with United States funds was in the neighborhood of $5,000,000 but this cannot be confirmed. The last United States contribution was said to have expired June 30, coincident with the end of the budgetary year.

Bundestag to Have Voice

It is the Government's intention to make the Gehlen Organization directly responsible to the Chancellor's office, but the Bundestag parties have been advised they will participate in supervising and controlling the organization. A committee composed of party floor leaders will have the power to delve into the organization's operations.

Associated Press
Former Gen. Reinhard Gehlen

Herr Gehlen was reputed to have brought about the downfall of Dr. Otto John, former West German intelligence chief who defected to East Germany last year. The former general also was said to have undermined Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz, a former lieuenant colonel who headed the intelligence section of the Defense Commissioner's office now the Defense Ministry. Herr Gehlen was said to have disposed of these men to gain control of all intelligence operations in West Germany for his own organization.

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